

## **714<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion**

The 714<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion (Railway Operations) (Steam and Diesel Electric) was constituted on 18 October 1927 and was originally known as the 56<sup>th</sup> Engineering Battalion (Railway). From then until the outbreak of World War II it existed only on paper. Although it was disbanded on 14 November 1940, it was reconstructed as the 56<sup>th</sup> Engineering Battalion (Railway Operating) because the entry of the United States into World War II was eminent. On 21 February 1941, it was redesignated as the 714<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion (Railway Operating). Then on 1 April 1942, it is again redesignated the 714<sup>th</sup> Engineer Railway Operating Battalion (ROB). Finally on 31 October 1942, the 714<sup>th</sup> ROB was activated at the Engineer Unit Training Center at Camp Clairborne, Louisiana.

The skill of running a railroad battalion was not something that the US Army could train men to do overnight. Railroading required years of experience. Therefore, the US Army had an agreement with civilian railroad companies that in event of war they would sponsor railroad battalions. They would provide key personnel and training for the organization. The Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railway sponsored the formation of the 714<sup>th</sup> ROB and the recruiting took place primarily in St Paul, Minnesota. However, when the recruiting was completed, the men came from far and wide across the country. Since railway battalions were part of the Engineer Corps, the majority of the officers of the 714<sup>th</sup> were Engineer Reserve officers.

The Engineer Center was not as improved as the rest of the camp so the men accustomed themselves to the rugged life. They first lived pyramid tents with dirt floors then moved into tar-paper shacks. Because of the preponderance of mutton on the menu, the men of the battalion took to calling their new home, "Goat Hill." They later moved over to the main camp and replaced the 759<sup>th</sup> ROB on the Camp Claiborne-Polk Railroad.

"Someone had conceived the idea of constructing a Military Railroad from Camp Claiborne to Camp Polk, a distance of about fifty miles. It had been completed by the time we got there, but no one had ever figured out a method for licking the mud. The more it rained, the deeper the track sank into the good old Louisiana mud. The battalion was greatly over-strength at this stage of the game, but it took the entire personnel to keep the track open and the trains running. Derailments were the order of the day and night and many a poor GI was aroused from his bed to get out and put the equipment back on the track. Military training was pursued just as diligently as before until GI Joe didn't know whether he was in the Army, working on a railroad or riding a horse. About this time the Military Railway Service was transferred, lock, stock, and barrel to the Transportation Corps and we all lost our identity as the 714<sup>th</sup> Engineer Railway Battalion and became known as the 714<sup>th</sup> Railway Operating Battalion. As the time rolled by, the unit shaped up very rapidly and rumors were rife as to where we were going and when. Eventually the day arrived, but the "switch-shanty" rumors still persisted for no one knew, with certainty, where we were bound." *714<sup>th</sup> Railway Operating Battalion History, 1946.*

After the creation of the US Army Transportation Corps on 31 July 1942, the Engineers turned the management of railroad organizations over to it. On 16 November 1942, the 714<sup>th</sup> was redesignated the 714<sup>th</sup> Railway Operating Battalion, Transportation Corps.

LTC Charles E. Hise assumed command of the 714<sup>th</sup> ROB on 22 November 1942. Hise had worked to organize the 714<sup>th</sup> on paper and began recruiting volunteers in the Engineer Reserve with the intention of serving in the 714<sup>th</sup> when it was finally activated. Since the 714<sup>th</sup> was operating a railroad that greatly exceeded the maximum length of 150 miles that battalion-level units were supposed to operate on, they were augmented by three additional platoons for "A" Company, each 87 men. The 714<sup>th</sup> then had a strength of 23 officers, 2 warrant officers, and 1,108 enlisted men.

The Camp Claiborne-Polk (C&P Military) Railroad was selected as the means of training up the 714<sup>th</sup>. On 14 March 1943, the 714<sup>th</sup> departed from Camp Claiborne and moved onto the railroad on 3 April 1943. LTC Hise was ordered to remain at Camp Claiborne where he would leave for the Pacific to become the Director of Railway Training of the entire MRS program. Lieutenant Colonel W. Hastedt assumed command of the battalion. Headquarters were established in the Alaska Railroad General Office along with the civilian General Manager.

"When the 714<sup>th</sup> moved over to the Camp Claiborne-Polk Railroad, back in December, 1942, they found the rolling stock and power in very sad shape indeed. 'B' Company found themselves up to their necks in work necessitating three shifts around the clock. At first baling wire and pliers did overtime duty in order to keep the power moving so that the 'C' Company boys would have something to train with. As things became more organized, the locomotives, one by one, were shopped and put back into serviceable condition. During this period of heavy work, the boys were also obliged to keep up their military training, inspections, parades, etc., so it was not wonder that the men were dog-tired most to the time. However, they came through with flying colors and became one of the best darn 'B' Companies in the entire Military Railway Service. They were later to demonstrate just how good they were when they were turned loose on the equipment of the Alaskan Railroad.

"Of course the wrecking crew put in plenty of overtime and the big hook was never allowed to cool. As fast as the good boys from 'C' Company would put them in the ditch, the boys from "B" Company would pick them up. In the meantime the 'Gandy-Dancers' from 'A' Company rebuilt the track as fast as it was torn up by the derailments. It was a particularly rainy season and most impossible to keep the track in any kind of line or surface. The result was an extremely ticklish job for the lads from 'C' Company. At one time it was contemplated to send a Chaplain with every train so that he would be hand to hear the last requests of the engine and train crews when the trains took for the woods. All in all, there was a great deal of misery, more hard work and some fun. Many of the officers got to talking to themselves, but never quite got to the stage of answering themselves so that we were only a little crazy when the sailing day came.



“For the purpose of the record, and for the information of the original outfit that started for Alaska, the 714<sup>th</sup> left Camp Claiborne under letter order of that camp dated 14<sup>th</sup> March, 1943. Our orders transferred us to Fort Lewis, Washington where we picked up further orders for Fort Richardson, Alaska, then known as APO 942, US Army, c/o Postmaster, Seattle, Washington. At Seattle we picked up three Track Maintenance Platoons, two of which came to form the 715<sup>th</sup> and one formed the 719<sup>th</sup> Railway Operating Battalions. The strength of the battalion for the mission at hand was 1108 enlisted men, two warrant officers and 23 commissioned officers. Actually, we went aboard with 1092 enlisted men instead of the 1108 due to illness, etc., at the last minute.

“A liaison officer was flown to Alaska ahead of the unit and arrangements were completed by him for the housing, messing and deployment of the troops upon arrival. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April, 1943, the outfit sailed into the beautiful harbor of Seward. The Navy Transport Chaumont was out home for hose hectic days at sea and not very many of the boys escaped the inevitable sea-sickness. The sighs of relief were plainly audible when the Chaumont finally docked at Seward and the GIs came streaming down the gang-plank.

“The Alaska Railroad, which is owned by the Federal Government and Operated by the Department of the Interior, proved to be the most important rail line in our operations against the Japs. It was the only means at hand for supplying the interior of Alaska with personnel and material for the defense of the territory and for setting up the offensive structure for out later moves against the Nipponese. The civilian personnel, even in peace times, had never been sufficient to adequately maintain and operate the line. Consequently, when war came, what few civilians remained were totally unable to keep this vital supply line going. Maintenance of the line was at a very low ebb, to such an extent that many of the structures were unsafe for operation. The mechanical personnel could not begin to cope with the problem of keeping the power and cars in shape for hauling war supplies, and the operating men were very few in number. So few were they that they couldn’t have kept the trains rolling if they worked continuously twenty-four hours at a stretch, day after day. The result was a tremendous back-log of material piled up at the port of Seward and the port of Whittier had not been opened for through traffic.

“For more than twenty-five months, the men of the 714<sup>th</sup> kept on the job and made the Alaska Railroad tick. Their efforts were duly appreciated and were finally recognized shortly before the unit returned to the States. By command of Lieutenant General, Delos C. Emmons, Commanding General of the Alaskan Department, the 714<sup>th</sup> was awarded the Meritorious Service Unit Plaque on 4 April, 1945 and entered the United States on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May, 1945. After twenty-one days of free time the 714<sup>th</sup> re-assembled at their old stamping grounds, Camp Claiborne, Louisiana, for re-deployment training. In the meantime, the war with Japan ended, and at this writing, the 714<sup>th</sup> is at Fort Eustis, Virginia.” *714<sup>th</sup> Railway Operating Battalion History, 1946.*

The track conditions were poor at the time the battalion arrived, and five grand maintenance sections were set up with a minimum of 66 miles and a maximum of 106

miles. A lieutenant with experience in track maintenance commanded each one of these sections.

Much construction was needed to augment the facilities of the Alaska Railroad to provide quarters for the men. One of the most difficult tasks was feeding the men. There were simply not enough adequately trained cooks. Another problem was the fact that the battalion had left Camp Claiborne, Louisiana without its basic railroad equipment that had been established by Supply Circular OT-29. Therefore, when the battalion arrived in Alaska, it required a great amount of miscellaneous equipment from the various branches of the Army. They also needed special equipment because of such frigid conditions and snow affecting the movement of trains and the maintenance of track and bridges.

During the greater part of World War II, the 714<sup>th</sup> had the responsibility of operating the 513-mile Alaskan Railroad that traverses America's mightiest mountain range and the heart of a vast arctic wilderness. In February 1943, a decision was made to send troops to augment the civilian employees and maintain and operate this railroad. At the time, the 714<sup>th</sup> was training on the C. & P. Military Railway and was selected to perform this task, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Herbert S. Huron, who was later replaced by Lieutenant Colonel W. Hastedt.

During the little more than two years that they spent in Alaska, the soldiers of the 714<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion renewed 240,387 crossties and 75,000 F.B.M. switch ties; installed approximately 63,000 cubic yards of ballast, and rebuilt or repaired 50 bridges consisting of 318 spans.

Between 1941 and 1944, the total amount of tonnage handled increased from 474,884 tons handled to 764,775 tons handled. Furthermore, the average number of cars moved per month on the Alaska Railroad increased from 3,150 per month in 1942 to 6,600 per month in October 1943.

On 7 May 1945, the 714 ROB was relieved of responsibility in the operation of the Alaska Railroad and returned to Camp Claiborne, Louisiana. The 714<sup>th</sup> did an outstanding job in the accomplishment of this mission and for this service was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation. It was redesignated as the 714<sup>th</sup> Transportation Corps, Railway Operating Battalion on 29 December 1945 then just the 714<sup>th</sup> Transportation Railway Operating Battalion (TROB) on 10 May 1947. Shortly after the end of hostilities, the Battalion arrived at Fort Eustis, Virginia, and assumed the responsibility for the operation of the Fort Eustis Railroad.

In the summer of 1950, the 714<sup>th</sup> departed Fort Eustis for Korea to perform duty with the Third Transportation Military Railway Service (TMRS). They arrived there on 26 August 1950, commanded by Major H. W. Martens. The 765<sup>th</sup> Railway Shop Battalion (RSB), commanded by Major James K. Hanks, had also arrived.

Unfortunately, these units were not at full strength. On 30 August, the total number of officers and men in the headquarters and its assigned units was only 229. Even worse

was the fact that, in spite of the conditions that existed in Europe during World War II, only 20 percent of them were experienced railroad men.

Headquarters, Third TMRS, was first set up at Pusan. On 1 October, they took over the responsibility for the railroad including the station limits of Chinju in the southwest and Waegwan in the north, giving them a total of 359 miles of railroad. On 25 September 1950, they moved their headquarters to Taegu, and by 1 October 1950 they had a total of 427 officers and men in the headquarters.

The 714<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion and the 765<sup>th</sup> RSB had 153 locomotives, all classifications, 344 passenger cars, and 3,655 freight cars of all types. They then made arrangements to transfer equipment in from the United States and from Japan.

During the month of September, 1,540 trains were dispatched handling 265,553 tons. Mileage had increased to 1,074. In October, 988 trains were dispatched, hauling 205,074 tons of military supplies. However, the Third TMRS. was crippled due to the action of the retreating enemy, who destroyed bridges, tunnels, roadbed, and rolling stock. Casualties were high and as a result, the 66 hospital cars in Korea by that time were in constant use.

On 11 October 1950, the Third TMRS moved from Taegu to Yongdongpo, where it set up a mobile headquarters. Then on 18 October, they established headquarters at Yongsan (Seoul) in the large K.N.R. building there.

Bands of North Korean guerillas added materially to the danger and difficulties of rail transportation, and the 714<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion was forced to engage in combat with them on several occasions, even though that was not their primary task. During June and July 1951, the fighting had become stationary. The South Koreans were taking over more and more of the operation of their railroads.

Although there for only a relatively short period of time, the Battalion saw plenty of action as is evidenced by six Campaign Streamers and a second Meritorious Unit Commendation. The 714<sup>th</sup> left Korea in July 1951 and returned to Fort Eustis. The 714<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion, along with the 729<sup>th</sup> TROB and 756<sup>th</sup> TRSB were attached to the 702<sup>nd</sup> Transportation Railway Grand Division on post. The 714<sup>th</sup> had its organic companies; Headquarters, A through C Companies. The three lettered companies were assigned to unit training. Fort Eustis had 37.4 miles of track, 187 miles of right of way, 29 locomotives, 83 pieces of freight equipment, 10 pieces of work equipment and 26 pieces of passenger equipment. On 15 August 1952, it was redesignated the 714<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion (Railway Operations) (Steam and Diesel Electric) (TBROS&DE).

The 763<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Battalion (Railway Shop) and the 774<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group (Railway) were inactivated on 3 June 1965. This left the 714<sup>th</sup> TBROS&DE as the only active railway unit remaining in the United States Army.



The 714<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion was involved in many activities and events at Fort Eustis. During 1966, it provided successful support to military exercises and training missions. It also supported various non-military programs that were important not only to the Army but also to the civilian community surrounding it. In 1965, the battalion lost all its attached units except the four railroad companies that comprised a railway operating battalion.

In 1966, the 714<sup>th</sup> Battalion like other battalions at Fort Eustis began to suffer in the rapid turn-over of personnel and expansion the result of the rapid build-up for the war in Vietnam. The 562<sup>nd</sup> Maintenance Company (Light) (Direct Support) was attached to the battalion on February 1966 and received the mission to provide maintenance support for equipment assigned to the US Army Support element, Terminal Training. The 508<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (Medium Truck) was activated but did not receive any troops until May and because of the critical shortage of medium trucks on post, the 508<sup>th</sup> only received 20 light trucks. By August it turned in its light trucks for 26 medium trucks, still short of its required 60 and it began to look more like a truck company than a holding company. It had as many as 300 soldiers with only one officer then dropped to 194 personnel in September. By October, the company received a boost of Vietnam veterans, AIT graduates and two permanently assigned officers along with all its authorized medium trucks except 17. On 10 September, the 805<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company deployed overseas to Vietnam and the 562<sup>nd</sup> Maintenance Company likewise received orders on 27 September for overseas deployment.

On 1 June 1966, 13 new railway detachments were activated. On 25 August 1966, the 488<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (Light Truck) was activated and attached to the 714<sup>th</sup> Battalion along with the newly activated 489<sup>th</sup> and 490<sup>th</sup> Transportation Detachments (Movement Control) on 19 August. The 516<sup>th</sup>, 517<sup>th</sup> and 527<sup>th</sup> Rail Detachments were inactivated on 20 October. While other units under the 714<sup>th</sup> were activated for future deployment overseas, the 488<sup>th</sup> Light Truck and 508<sup>th</sup> Medium Truck Companies provided support for the Transportation School and Fort Eustis.

Throughout 1966, the Battalion provided command and control for the following in addition to the organic, HHC, A through C Companies:

- 488<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (Light Truck)
- 508<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (Medium Truck) (Cargo)
- 562<sup>nd</sup> Maintenance Company (Light) (Direct Support)
- 805<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (Light Truck)
- 149<sup>th</sup> Transportation Detachment (Railway Station)
- 470<sup>th</sup> Transportation Detachment (Railway Station)
- 489<sup>th</sup> Transportation Detachment (Movement Control)
- 490<sup>th</sup> Transportation Detachment (Movement Control)
- 505<sup>th</sup> Transportation Detachment (Trailer Transfer Point Operating)
- 508<sup>th</sup> Transportation Detachment (Trailer Transfer Point Operating)
- 513<sup>th</sup> Transportation Detachment (Railway Station)
- 514<sup>th</sup> Transportation Detachment (Railway Station)
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In August 1966, 2LT William Eichenberg's 505<sup>th</sup> Trailer Transfer Detachment shipped its vehicles and CONEXs by rail car bound to the *USS Bessemer Victory* at Beaumont, Texas. The 16-man detachment boarded a commercial plane wearing fatigues carrying their weapons and flew out on 7 or 8 September. Because many of his soldiers were under 21 years of age, the stewardesses could not serve them the customary cocktails. They were old enough to fight a war but not to drink alcohol. At Oakland Depot, California they boarded the WWII troop ship, *USNS Simon Bolivar Buckner*, with a group of Marines. They made a short stop at Okinawa then Da Nang, Vietnam, to drop off the Marines. They sailed that night to Vung Tau from where they caught a flight to Pleiku.

2LT Forrest Becht and Bob Stiltenspol were assigned as commanders of the 525<sup>th</sup> and 526<sup>th</sup> Rail Detachments respectively right out of Transportation Officers Basic Course in the fall of 1966. On 27 December, they deployed with their 12-man detachments by air with their M16s to Oakland where they boarded a troop ship bound for Vietnam. They arrived at Vung Tau on 20 January 1967 and were bused to Saigon. They fell under the Traffic Management Agency (TMA) and Becht's 525<sup>th</sup> Rail Detachment was assigned to the rail yard at Saigon and Stiltenspol's 526<sup>th</sup> Rail Detachment was assigned to the Port of Qui Nhon. Since the Vietnamese ran the railroad, the US Army rail detachments just processed Transportation Movement Dispatches (TMD) and conducted port clearance. The 525<sup>th</sup> pushed cargo primarily to the logistic base at Long Binh and the 526<sup>th</sup> pushed cargo to the Phu Cat Air Base. This work did not require the full 12 personnel so half of them were turned over to the TMA for reassignment. By September, the new commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Region, TMA felt that the work load did not require even an officer and five soldiers so he reduced the detachment in Saigon to just two enlisted men who worked with two Vietnamese. This was the extent of rail operations during the Vietnam War.

On 1 April 1967, the 663<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Company (Railway Car Repair) was activated with three officers and 13 enlisted men under the 714<sup>th</sup> TBROS&DE. It took over B Company's Store Section then the Rip Track and Wheel and Axel Shop on 14 April and the Paint shop on 24 April. By 30 April, the company strength increased to five officers and 93 men but in the rush to expand suffered from a lack of personnel trained and experienced in operating the equipment. Most of the soldiers in the company were deployable. By 31 May, the company contained five officers and 142 enlisted men. By June, it began to function as a company but rapid turnover of personnel for overseas assignments created difficulties.

The 157<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (Boat) had been activated at Fort Story on 1 June 1966 then inactivated on 25 July 1966. It was later reactivated as the 157<sup>th</sup> Transportation

Company (Diesel-Electric Locomotive Repair) at Fort Eustis on 1 August 1967 and spent the next year organizing.

During 1967, the 714<sup>th</sup> TBROSD&E took part in major operations such as OPERATION CABINET MAKER. It departed Fort Eustis on 19 October for Fort Belvoir, Virginia to assist other military units for the protection of the Pentagon during protest demonstrations held on 21 and 22 October then returned on 24 October. The Battalion returned to Fort Eustis on 24 October 1967. Throughout the year the 714<sup>th</sup> provided the Army with many graduates from its AIT training program in MOS 64A10, Light Truck Driver.

On 25 January 1968, the 716<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group (Railway) was activated and initially received attachment of the 714<sup>th</sup> TBROS&DE with its attached 488<sup>th</sup>, 508<sup>th</sup>, and 663<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Companies. Later other companies were attached directly to the Group, but not a battalion headquarters. The 157<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (Diesel-Electric Locomotive Repair) had been activated at Fort Story on 1 June 1966 and was not attached to the 714<sup>th</sup> TBROS&DE until 15 July 1968. The 203<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Company (Light Truck) was called to active duty from Reserve status on 13 May 1968 and transferred from Garden City, New York to Fort Eustis on 17 May. The company was understrength and short E4s and below to drive putting a strain on the officers and NCOs. On 3 August 1968, the 100<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (Light/Medium Truck) left Germany and attached to the 716<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group (Railway) at Fort Eustis.

On 6 April, the 488<sup>th</sup> Light Truck Company received a temporary change of station to Andrews Air Force Base for seven days during Operation GARDEN PLOT. This was part of the 714<sup>th</sup> Riot Control Task Force for the Military District of Washington.

On 3 September 1968, the 716<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group was inactivated and the 714<sup>th</sup> TBROS&DE was attached to the 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Command (Terminal B), which later became 7<sup>th</sup> Group. The 714<sup>th</sup> TBROS&DE gave up the 488<sup>th</sup> Light Truck for the 100<sup>th</sup> and 203<sup>rd</sup> Truck Companies and had the additional companies attached:

- 100<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (Light Truck)
- 157<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (Diesel-Electric Locomotive Repair)
- 203<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Company (Light Truck) (5-ton)
- 508<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (Medium Truck) (Cargo)
- 663<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Company (Railway Car Repair) (General Support)

The 38<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion (Truck) completed its permanent change of station from Germany to Fort Eustis on 20 September 1968 and was attached to the 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Command. The 100<sup>th</sup> Light/Medium Truck, 203<sup>rd</sup> Light Truck, and 508<sup>th</sup> Medium Truck Companies were then attached to the 38<sup>th</sup> Truck Battalion. This left the 714<sup>th</sup> TBROS&DE with the following companies:

- Headquarters Company
- A Company
- B Company
- C Company
- 157<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (Diesel-Electric Locomotive Repair)



663<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Company (Railway Car Repair) (General Support)

During 1969, The Fort Eustis Military Railroad and the 714<sup>th</sup> ran 355 trains during the first quarter. Passengers carried totaled 9855. The Fort Eustis Railroad (FERR) received 91 loads and 10 empties. The FERR handled out 14 loads and 47 empties.

The train movements section was involved in several Transportation School rail demonstrations. On 17 May, Armed Forces Day, the section dispatched, coordinated, and supervised the operation of all trains used to carry persons to rifle ranges, Felker Army Airfield, and Third Port to view the numerous exhibits on display. On the night of 30 June to 1 July 1969, they participated in a simulated hospital-ambulance train exercise.

The Fort Eustis Military Railroad and the 714<sup>th</sup> ran 321 trains during the second quarter of 1969. Passengers carried totaled 18,770. The greater increase in passengers was brought about by the completely full loads carried on Armed Forces Day. On 13 September 1969, the 714<sup>th</sup> participated in a Practice Alert Exercise. This unit did satisfactorily meet the objectives of the assembly test within required time frame.

During the month of October a three day field problem was held, and the 714<sup>th</sup> received a satisfactory for the problem. They also organized and sponsored an AIT Reserve unit of which 111 men were graduated.

The 714<sup>th</sup> again deployed to Washington D.C. on 13 November 1969 for the use of riot control during civil disturbances that occurred at the November moratorium.

The 714<sup>th</sup> provided a demonstration on the history of rail operations in a military theater of operations from the Civil War to present during Armed Forces Day at Fort Eustis. In addition, the battalion furnished trains to escort guests on a tour of Fort Eustis. They were the center of attention at the Department of Defense "Golden Spike Centennial Celebration" honoring the linking of East and West at Promontory Summit, Utah. The battalion sent a detachment of personnel to operate and maintain an authentic steam locomotive, USA 612, and train which was used in the re-enactment. The locomotive and train were prepared and shipped by the battalion for the ceremony.

Throughout 1971, the 714<sup>th</sup> built six sets of portable stairs and interior stairs for railroad bleacher cars and 100 yards of track in front of 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group Headquarters. Without heavy lifting equipment, they moved a caboose by way of 60-ton Lowboy. They also moved one 35-ton steam locomotive from the Fort Eustis Railroad to the front of 7<sup>th</sup> Group Headquarters for practice in adventure training.

In 1972, the 714<sup>th</sup> deployed again to Washington D.C. for civil disturbance duty from 1 to 7 May. All aspects of the deployment were successful. On 15 May this unit participated in Armed Forces Day. All displays were extremely well prepared and the event was very successful. The Battalion conducted two week active duty training for the following reserve units: 706<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group (Railway), 717<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion (Railway), 153<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Company (Diesel-Electric Locomotive Repair), 67<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group (Railway), 729<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion (Railway), 757<sup>th</sup>

Transportation Battalion, 1151<sup>st</sup> Transportation Company (Diesel-Electric Locomotive Repair), 1150<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (CAR-RPR).

In an effort to beautify Fort Eustis, the 714<sup>th</sup> was given the mission to help disassemble many of the old temporary buildings. This project was started and several buildings were dismantled with the salvaged materials being used for self-help projects. The 714<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion was inactivated on 22 June 1972. At that time the battalion had the following units:

Headquarters Company

A Company

B Company

C Company

157<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company

663<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Company

That ended the active duty military role in railroad training and the Fort Eustis “to the Main Gate and Back” (MG&B) rail line was turned over to a small civilian detachment.